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FNS Welcomes Administrator Betty Jo Nelsen



The agency welcomes Betty Jo Nelsen as the new administrator for FNS. Following her swearing-in by Secretary Clayton Yeutter in his office on January 16, Nelson returned to FNS to meet senior staff and to address all employees. She was accompanied by Assistant Secretary Bertini, Deputy Assistant Secretary Watkins, and Acting Associate Administrator Braley.

Administrator Nelsen brings a wide range of legislative and public service experience. A former Wisconsin state representative and the first woman to serve as the state's minority leader, Nelsen hopes to reach out to a greater number of America's needy. "Our agenda, quite frankly, is to make the programs user friendly," Nelsen says.

Nelsen is a longtime activist in health and welfare reform efforts. One of her

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Assistant Secretary Visits the Northeast

Assistant Secretary Catherine Bertini made her first visit to NERO to be part of the region's "1,000 Points of Light" ceremony honoring the volunteer efforts of its employees.

In her remarks to the employees, Bertini praised the work and the spirit of FNS volunteerism, which leads so many others to give their time and help.

Her schedule also included local site visits to a high school that is undertaking a voluntary polystyrene/plastic recycling program in its cafeteria; a WIC program at a community health center; and a visit to a food stamp demonstration project that provides services to the disabled, the elderly, and the homeless.

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Assistant Secretary Bertini was the special guest at NERO's "1,000 Points of Light" ceremony honoring those employees who have answered the President's call to volunteer. In her remarks, Bertini stressed the idea that the measure of our success is how well we respond to those who need our help.



Assistant Secretary Bertini (left) and NERO Administrator Harold McLean (center) faced some challenging questions from Tony Sabadini (right) of the North Quincy High School "Northstar."

A site visit to a food stamp demonstration project in Boston that provides services to the disabled, the elderly, and the homeless provided an opportunity for the Assistant Secretary to become more familiar with the program.

Pictured left to right are Assistant Secretary Bertini and Department of Welfare officials Jim Hart, assistant director, and Marcia Fischer, director; and regional Food Stamp Program Director Lynda Silva.



Members of the Young Republicans Club of North Quincy High School joined Assistant Secretary Bertini for lunch.



-Story and photos by
NERO Public Affairs Staff

Deputy Assistant Secretary Addresses National Conference

Representatives from state agencies, USDA, and the American School Food Service Association participated in a national conference December 5-8 hosted by the Georgia agency. The conference theme was "Leadership for the '90s." The national meeting was designed to promote interagency cooperation in problem solving, to refine leadership skills, and to increase knowledge in the areas of nutrition, education, food service, management, and public policy.

The December 6 agenda was highlighted by a welcoming speech given by Deputy Assistant Secretary Birge Watkins. In his address, Watkins shared some of his experiences with the school lunch program since taking his post in mid-November. Watkins said he enjoys meeting with students participating in school lunch programs and hopes to meet with more in the future.

Conference participants were also given detailed information regarding provisions of Public Law 101-147, formerly known as H.R. 24. Officially cited as the "Child Nutrition and WIC

Reauthorization Act of 1989," the law amends the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 and extends five existing programs through 1994.



Welcoming speeches were given by USDA leaders. From left to right: SERO Administrator Virgil Conrad, Deputy Assistant Secretary Birge Watkins, and Acting Associate Administrator George Braley.

-Story and photo by Cathleen Jensen
SERO Public Affairs Staff

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priorities will be to simplify the application process for people needing food stamps and Aid to Families With Dependent Children. Nelsen adds, "We want to make it easier for people to get the benefits they are eligible for. I think those who need should have."

As a member of the Wisconsin Assembly's Joint Finance Committee, Nelsen was one of 16 legislators responsible for developing the state's \$11 billion annual budget.

Prior to holding elective office, Nelsen was actively involved in her

community. She was coordinator of the Milwaukee Voluntary Action Center Involvement Corps and managed a program of volunteers with the Milwaukee County Department of Public Welfare.

A native of Massachusetts, Nelsen specialized in food and nutrition at Massachusetts State College, Framingham, where she earned a bachelor's degree in education.

-Story by Mary Kennedy
Photo by Pamela Faith
Public Information Staff

...A Message From Catherine Bertini

Computers for Van Ness Students

Giant Food and Safeway stores are providing an opportunity for schools in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area to receive computer equipment and software.

Schools can receive Apple computers, printers, and software with Giant's blue cash register tapes. Safeway's yellow receipts can earn IBM computers, printers, and software. Items are awarded based on the total dollar value of the collected receipts.

Because the Department's adopted school, Van Ness Elementary, now has only 10 computers for about 200 students, both supermarket programs are applicable. The children are already bringing in their store receipts.

Secretary Yeutter is asking all USDA employees to help the students in this worthy cause. I strongly support the Secretary's request and urge you to bring in your Giant and Safeway receipts. You can put them in the designated mailbox slot in the mailroom (Room 910).

The Giant program ends March 31, and the Safeway program continues until April 21, 1990.

These food stores are providing an excellent educational opportunity to our local schools, which we should all applaud. Their generosity also provides us a wonderful opportunity to help Van Ness students. I thank you for participating generously in this worthwhile endeavor.

MPRO Holiday Spirit Overflows

MPRO's gift drive for Denver's homeless shelters went into overdrive during the last weeks before Christmas. Overflowing collection boxes around the

office had to be emptied several times before the drive ended. Cochairmen Ron Ulibarri of Food Distribution Programs and Irene Wise, Denver Field Office officer in charge, spearheaded the drive.



Ron Ulibarri and Irene Wise are surrounded by gifts collected by MPRO staff for homeless shelters in Denver.

Five local homeless shelters benefited from FNS' generosity--volunteers of America, Denver Emergency Housing, Samaritan House, Sacred Heart, and Curtis Park Community Center. A \$25 supermarket gift certificate and \$80 in cash donations were earmarked for each of the shelters, along with clothing, food, toys, diapers, baby food, blankets, and toiletries.

In addition, the traditional Christmas gift exchange took place at a buffet luncheon on December 15. This year, 66 employees drew names and chose a gift to "fit" the recipient.

Gifts were opened at the luncheon and then donated to the Curtis Park Community Center Day Care Program and the Warren Village East Day Care Center. Each of the two centers also received a \$25 supermarket gift certificate.

-Story by Joanne Widner
Photo by Craig Forman
MPRO Public Affairs Staff

Food Programs Participation Update

Following are preliminary estimates of participation in the Federal-State food assistance programs for the month of October with comparisons to the previous month and to the same month of last year.

	<u>Oct. 1988</u>	<u>Sep. 1989</u>	<u>Oct. 1989</u>	<u>2/</u>
<u>Food Stamp Program: 1/</u>				
People participating (mil.)	18.4	19.0	19.4	
Value of bonus coupons (\$ mil.)	962.8	977.9	1,161.3	
Average bonus per person	\$ 52.22	\$ 51.59	\$ 59.74	
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	1,064.8	1,080.0	1,275.3	
<u>National School Lunch Program:</u>				
Number of schools participating (thous.)	91.5	N/A	N/A	
Children participating (mil.)	24.8	23.6	24.3	
Children reached with free or reduced price lunches (mil.)	11.6	11.5	11.5	
Percentage of lunches served free	40.1	38.7	40.4	
Percentage of lunches served at reduced price	6.6	5.8	6.8	
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	390.8	369.3	408.7	
<u>School Breakfast Program:</u>				
Number of schools participating (thous.)	40.0	N/A	N/A	
Children participating (mil.)	3.9	3.6	4.0	
Percentage of breakfasts served free or at reduced price	86.5	85.5	85.6	
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	56.8	55.4	65.2	
<u>Child and Adult Care Food Program:</u>				
Number of meals served in centers (mil.)	41.4	38.0	42.6	
Number of meals served in homes (mil.)	31.9	34.9	36.4	
Percentage of all meals served free	78.3	78.5	79.1	
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	57.8	60.1	65.4	
<u>Special Supplemental Food Program (WIC):</u>				
People participating (mil.)	3.8	4.4	4.5	
Food cost (\$ mil.)	122.5	130.5	133.6	
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	150.2	176.1	166.5	
<u>Commodity Supplemental Food Program: 3/</u>				
People participating (thous.)	219.8	285.1	275.2	
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	3.9	5.2	4.8	
<u>Food Distribution to Indians and Needy Families:</u>				
Number of projects in operation	108	109	109	
People participating (thous.)	131.6	138.7	138.0	
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	4.6	4.6	4.7	
<u>Total USDA Food Donations (All Programs):</u>				
Entitlement Foods (\$ mil.)	63.0	81.6	55.4	
Bonus Foods (\$ mil.)	55.8	27.2	26.4	
Temporary Emergency Food Assistance (TEFAP) ..	16.6	15.5	15.8	

1/ Puerto Rico has been excluded from all months.

Vacancy Announcements

Due to unforeseen delays, the customary vacancy announcements will not appear in this issue of the Friday Letter.

Mary E. Kennedy, Editor

The Friday Letter is published every two weeks by the Public Information Staff of the Food and Nutrition Service. To update mailing address or to alter number of copies received, please mail changes to the FNS Public Information Staff, 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 819, Alexandria, VA 22302, Telephone 756-3000.